

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

AID-05 SAM-01 /072 W

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R 071126Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3941

INFO COMUSMACTHAI BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 23506

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT WRAPUP

SUMMARY: THAI PARLIAMENT CONVENED IN ITS SECOND EXTRA-ORDINARY SESSION ON NOVEMBER 7 PRIMARILY TO RECONSIDER THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION BILL REJECTED BY THE SENATE ON OCTOBER 24. THE HOUSE PASSED IT BY A VOTE OF 157 TO 0. END SUMMARY.

1. THE PARLIAMENT CONVENED IN ITS SECOND EXTRAORDINARY SESSION ON NOVEMBER 7, PRIMARILY TO RECONSIDER THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION BILL, WHICH THE SENATE IN A SURPRISE MOVE, REJECTED ON OCTOBER 24. THIS BILL CALLS FOR THE ELECTION OF ALL KAMNANS AND PUYAIBANS (SUB-DISTRICT CHIEFS AND VILLAGE HEADMEN) WITHIN 90 DAYS AFTER THE PASSAGE OF THE BILL. 144 MP'S REQUESTED THE CONVENING OF THE SESSION.

2. THE BILL PASSED BY A VOTE OF 157 TO 0 ON NOVEMBER 7 AFTER DEBATE FOCUSING ON THE PROVISIONS TO HOLD NATIONWIDE ELECTIONS FOR ALL KAMNANS AND PUYAIBANS, WHICH WAS OPPOSED BY KAMNANS AND PUYAIBANS WHO HAD BEEN ELECTED RECENTLY. (ABOUT 1,000 OF THEM DEMONSTRATED IN FRONT OF THE PARLIAMENT AGAINST THE BILL TODAY.) ANOTHER ARGUMENT AGAINST THE BILL WAS THE ALLEGED ELECTION COST OF 700 MILLION  
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BAHT.

3. THE BULK OF THE SUPPORT OF THE BILL CAME FROM THE OPPOSITION PARTIES. TWO OF THE CO-SPONSORS OF THE BILL WER SURIN MATSADIT, A DEMOCRAT, AND KHLAEO NORAPATI, THE SOCIAL UNITED FRONT PARTY LEADER.

4. THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WAS ABLE TO RECONSIDER THE LOCAL ELECTIONS BILL AT THIS TIME BECAUSE THE SPEKAER OF THE HOUSE, PRASIT KANCHANAWAT, USING CONVOLUTED REASONING, DECLARED THAT THIS BILL FALLS UNDER THE RUBRIC OF A MONEY BILL SINCE FUNDS WERE APPROPRIATED FOR IT IN THE BUDGET BILL WHICH PASSED THE SENATE ON OCTOBER 22. UNDER SECTION 150 OF THE CONSTITUTION, THE HOUSE CAN RECONSIDER A MONEY BILL REJECTED BY THE SENATE FORTHWITH, WHILE IT CANNOT RECONSIDER A NON-MONEY BILL REJECTED BY THE SENATE UNTIL AFTER A LAPSE OF 180 DAYS. IF THE HOUSE PASSES THE BILL WITH AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY OF 135, THE BILL WILL BECOME LAW WITHOUT THE NEED FOR SURTHER SENATE CONSIDERATION.

5. COMMENT: THE CONVENING OF THE SECOND EXTRAORDINARY SESSION COMES AS A DISTINCT SURPRISE. TOWARD THE END

OF THE LAST SESSION MANY MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT COALITION AND OPPOSITION MP'S WERE READY FOR A VACATION AND LOOKING FORWARD TO GOING BACK TO THEIR CONSTITUENCIES TO DO A LITTLE POLITICKING. THE SENATE'S ACTION HAS ALTERED THE SITUATION.

6. THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE SPEAKER AND THE CALLING OF THE SECOND EXTRAORDINARY SESSION INDICATES THE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE BILL. IT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE THE KAMNANS AND THE PUYAIBANS WILL HAVE A LARGE VOICE IN THE EXPENDITURE OF THE 3.5 MILLION BAHTS RECENTLY ALLOCATED IN THE BUDGET BILL FOR THE TAMBON IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

7. THE MP'S WERE ALSO MIFFED BECAUSE THE APPOINTED SENATE REJECTED A POLITICALLY IMPORTANT BILL WHICH HAD BEEN PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BY A WIDE MARGIN, 151 TO 1, ON THE THIRD READING.

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8. THE SENATE'S ACTION HAS ADDED SOME FUEL TO THE HERETOFORE RATHER QUIESCENT MOVEMENT TO ABOLISH THE SENATE. HOW FAR THIS MOVEMENT GOES WILL DEPEND ON THE FUTURE ACTIONS OF THE SENATE.

9. SINCE THE LOCAL ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD IN FEBRUARY, A CONSIDERABLE TASK OF ORGANIZATION WILL BE INVOLVED, AND

THE IMPACT OF THESE ELECTIONS ON THE OVERALL POLITICAL  
SITUATION CANNOT YET BE CALCULATED.

10. THE CONVENING OF THE SESSION PRESENTS THE OPPORTUNITY  
FOR FURTHER POSTURING IN THE PRESS ABOUT THE MAKEUP  
OF THE NEW CABINET. HOWEVER, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT  
KHUKRIT IS IN NO HURRY TO MAKE A FINAL DECISION, MUCH  
LESS TO ANNOUNCE THE MAKEUP OF THE NEW CABINET AT THIS  
TIME.

WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

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